

am well familiar with the “big is bad” theory. That is not what this is. The merger fees are being reduced for, like, 85 percent of all filers. This simply allows them to do what they need to do and nothing more. It is unfortunate.

I am thankful to my cosponsor, Senator KLOBUCHAR, who is the lead sponsor of this bill, for the bipartisan effort in which she has managed this.

## CLOTURE VOTE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

## CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1146, Dana M. Douglas, of Louisiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Merkley, Tina Smith, Sheldon Whitehouse, Benjamin L. Cardin, Maria Cantwell, Amy Klobuchar, Jon Ossoff, Mark Kelly, Jacky Rosen, Brian Schatz, Mazie Hirono, Angus S. King, Jr., Thomas R. Carper, Sherrod Brown, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Dana M. Douglas, of Louisiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. HICKENLOOPER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 386 Ex.]

## YEAS—63

Baldwin	Heinrich	Romney
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Rounds
Blunt	Kelly	Sanders
Booker	Kennedy	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Cassidy	Markey	Tester
Collins	Menendez	Tillis
Coons	Merkley	Toomey
Cornyn	Murkowski	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Feinstein	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Graham	Peters	Wicker
Grassley	Portman	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	Young

## NAYS—31

Barrasso	Hawley	Risch
Blackburn	Hoeben	Rubio
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Braun	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Lankford	Shelby
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Daines	Lummis	Thune
Ernst	Marshall	Tuberville
Fischer	McConnell	
Hagerty	Paul	

## NOT VOTING—6

Burr	Cruz	Hickenlooper
Capito	Duckworth	Moran

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VAN HOLLEN). On this vote, the yeas are 63, the nays are 31.

The motion is agreed to.

## EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Dana M. Douglas, of Louisiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

## FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, 12 years ago, I stood on this Senate floor for my maiden speech. I was new to the Senate, but I had a sense of what I thought was possible to achieve for my constituents in Ohio, having served in the House for 12 years and in two Cabinet-level jobs in the Bush 43 administration. In that speech, I talked about my interest in solving problems and working across the aisle to tackle big issues facing our country. That is what we have tried to do. We have had some successes and some disappointments, but through it all, I have always considered it a great honor to have been given the chance to represent my neighbors, the people of Ohio.

My team and I have viewed it as a sacred trust to do all we could while we had this temporary privilege. Our commitment was to move the ball forward wherever possible for our great country and for the families we represented. Through our legislative and oversight results, I believe we have honored that pledge. It has been a team effort.

I have been blessed with an awesome staff—sitting behind me today—some amazing Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle, willing to find common ground, friends in every corner of Ohio whose input helped me to represent our diverse State, and most importantly, an understanding family and a partner in all things in Jane Portman.

All of us get asked what inspired us to get into public service in the first place. In my family, my mom Joan taught by her example that serving others was our duty. We had no choice. And through their own volunteer work, my brother and my sister have helped change lives, and I respect that and respect all the caring and giving Ohioans who do that. I chose to serve in a different way, which involved the rough

and tumble of politics—not for everybody but also a way to help others.

Another impetus for getting involved in politics was actually my father, Bill Portman, even though, as a small business guy, he thought I was absolutely crazy to get into this line of business. When I was a kid, he gave up his safe job as a forklift truck salesman for a bigger company to live out his own American dream and start his own business. He took a big risk, gave up healthcare, gave up a retirement plan, and five people—my mom was the bookkeeper—started Portman Equipment Company, with lots of debt. They actually lost money the first few years. But he never gave up on his dream and eventually, through hard work and integrity, found his niche. My brother, my sister, and I all worked at Portman Equipment Company in high school and in college. By the time my dad retired and my brother took over the company, there were almost 300 people working there.

Keeping that American dream alive and creating the conditions to allow that next Bill Portman to take that risk, to build his or her dream and in doing so help so many other families and help so many communities, has really been my North Star. That is what has guided me.

Dad also played a special role in my decision to run for the U.S. Senate. As you will recall, in the couple years before 2010, we had the Great Recession. Our country went through some tough times. I had stepped away from public service at that time. I was back in the private sector, thinking I would probably not ever run again. Then my friend and mentor Senator George Voinovich surprised all of you here in the Senate, as well as his constituents in Ohio, with his decision to retire, and Jane and I began thinking about it and traveling around, talking to people. Across Ohio, people told me about the real-world ramifications of the policy decisions being made here in Washington and how it affected them.

I remember in early 2009 asking my dad if he would do it again. Would he take that risk and start a business from scratch? His answer was troubling. He said, you know, he just wasn't sure. He listed higher taxes that were being talked about, more healthcare costs, more regulations. He said: I just don't know if it would be worth it. That conversation with my dad was part of what drove me to run for the Senate. I believed that the country needed leadership to drive policy in the direction of more economic growth and more opportunity, to help more people achieve their American dream.

Not many people these days would say politics is an honorable profession. A recent poll suggested only 20 percent of Americans approve of the job Congress is doing. And I guess we all give people reasons to be skeptical, especially when we seem too political and partisan gridlock keeps us from solving

problems people care about, like energy prices or what is happening on our southern border. But I know it doesn't have to be that way. Politics at its best can be honorable. It is about finding common ground to help people.

We all have our own views, and that is fine, and as elected leaders, we certainly have a responsibility to represent our States and our constituents. But I think sometimes we forget we were also hired to do our best to find that common ground and to achieve results. That is what we were hired to do.

When I need to be reminded about that, I think about my political mentor George H. W. Bush, who gave me my first job in politics, first on the campaign trail and then in his White House. To him, public service was absolutely a noble calling, a way to serve, and he helped young people like me see that by his example. In working for his son, George W. Bush, I witnessed that same commitment to public service.

In my Senate office, as these folks behind me can recite, we have a mission statement, and we developed it together. It says the following:

Our mission is to deliver bipartisan results through effective servant leadership with integrity, selflessness, and excellence so all Ohioans can reach their God-given potential.

What is servant leadership? I think it begins with the respect for constituents by listening to them and understanding their concerns and then, whenever possible, delivering those results for them, from case work to legislation.

During my time in the Senate, I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish for Ohio and the country by trying to follow that formula. I am told by my staff today that as of this week, over the past 12 years, there are 195 bills that I have authored or coauthored that have been signed into law. By definition, almost all are bipartisan and the product of the back-and-forth that leads to that common ground.

Not all of these bills are monumental; I will say that. And my constituents will never hear about the vast majority of them because they aren't controversial and therefore the media doesn't cover it, but they make a difference. As an example, a bill I wrote with Senator HASSAN is on the President's desk today, about early hearing detection—not the most pressing issue to many people but to the Ohio family whose child's hearing loss will be diagnosed early, it can be life-changing.

These accomplishments are a testament to the willingness of Members and staff on both sides of the aisle to find a way to achieve mutual objectives by listening and respecting different points of view. By doing that even during a time when there is so much distrust and dysfunction, we have been able to achieve a lot together. Today, I want to touch on a few of those areas. Don't worry, it is not going to be 195, but a few of them.

Thanks to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman BOB

MENENDEZ and Ranking Member RISCH for working with me on a number of bills, including the establishment of the Global Engagement Center with Senator MURPHY that is combatting the growing threat of disinformation and propaganda.

Thanks to the leaders of the Finance Committee, Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member CRAPO, for working with me on so many bills, including working this week with my friend BEN CARDIN and me on our retirement bill.

Senator CARDIN, thanks for being my partner for over 20 years on successfully expanding retirement savings and a bunch of other issues, from hospice to Israel, to IRS reform, to affordable housing. I dragged him into IRS reform; he didn't want to do it.

As the ranking member of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I would like to thank all my committee colleagues and the chairman, GARY PETERS. While we may hail from different States—in fact, he hails from that State to the north, and as an Ohio State fan, I have to make that point—we are friends, and we have been able to accomplish a lot in the last couple of years, from helping protect houses of worship, to essential postal reform, to combatting cyber attacks. I have been proud of the work we have done at HSGAC, where I have served for the last 12 years.

The bipartisan investigations I spearheaded as chair of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations with Senator CARPER led to the end of websites like backpage.com that allowed the trafficking of women and children online.

I also led efforts to ensure our Federal Government doesn't allow human trafficking to occur with the influx of unaccompanied minors crossing our U.S.-Mexican border. Our bipartisan oversight on the safety of unaccompanied children crossing the border demonstrated that Federal Agencies must implement reforms immediately to ensure the safety and security of these vulnerable children.

Our 18-month bipartisan PSI investigation that detailed how drug traffickers exploit vulnerabilities in our international mail system to easily ship synthetic, illegal narcotics like fentanyl from China into the United States through the Postal Service led to the successful implementation of the STOP Act.

Through a bipartisan investigation, we also found that China has been targeting and stealing U.S. taxpayer-funded scientific research and intellectual property through its talent programs. Essentially, American taxpayers have been unwittingly funding the rise of China's military and economy over the past couple of decades, while Federal Agencies have done little to stop it.

With Senator CARPER, I introduced the Safeguarding American Innovation Act to require the Federal Government to take decisive action to safeguard our intellectual property, our inven-

tions, our research here in America. It has passed the Senate—thank you.

I am disappointed certain House Members have blocked it, and I urge my colleagues to get it enacted in the next Congress.

Our investigations this year also revealed China's malign efforts to target, influence, and undermine the U.S. Federal Reserve. We must do more to safeguard our homeland from the threat of foreign adversaries, especially China.

I appreciate Senator HEINRICH for launching the bipartisan Senate Artificial Intelligence Caucus with me to ensure thoughtful, bipartisan policymaking on AI. Fifteen of our bills to ensure safe and coordinated use of artificial intelligence have now become law.

Since 2015, when my bipartisan Federal Permitting Improvement Act was signed into law as title 41 of the FAST Act, I have worked to update our aging infrastructure and create good jobs, while expanding and streamlining the permitting process.

Thanks to Senator SINEMA and Senator SULLIVAN for their passion on this issue and their leadership in passing the Federal Permitting Reform and Jobs Act to make these key provisions of FAST-41 and the permitting council permanent, which speeds up the permitting process for some of the largest infrastructure projects, resulting, by the way, on average, with a 45-percent time savings and major cost savings. We should expand that.

I also want to thank the bipartisan group of Senators who worked with me on the historic infrastructure bill, with a special thanks to my lead democratic partner, Senator SINEMA, along with Senators COLLINS, ROMNEY, CASSIDY, MURKOWSKI, WARNER, SHAHEEN, TESTER, and MANCHIN.

Every President and every Congress in modern times has talked about the need to fix our aging infrastructure, but we worked from the middle out to form a bipartisan coalition of 69 Members to go beyond the talk and make some of these needed and historic improvements to our Nation's roads and bridges, ports and rail, upgrade our Nation's broadband system, and so much more.

The process to me was almost as important as the substance. We did it by focusing on our key principles of core infrastructure only, no tax hikes, and bipartisan consensus. I was proud to team up with each one of you, and I thank you for your willingness to find that elusive common ground and so do people in my hometown.

We have heard politicians talk about fixing the Brent Spence Bridge, which connects Ohio to Senator MCCONNELL's State of Kentucky. For over 30 years, we have been talking about it. It is at the confluence of two major interstate highways and currently carries more than 160,000 vehicles a day, which is twice as many as it was ever designed to carry.

It has no shoulders on the bridge because they have been eliminated to

carry more traffic, which makes it unsafe, and it is still congested at every rush hour. Local, State, and Federal stakeholders have never been able to come up with a way to solve this problem. The bipartisan infrastructure law finally paves the way to fix the Brent Spence Bridge, which not only makes travel safer and easier for Ohioans but improves the movement of goods throughout the Midwest and actually strengthens our national economy.

There are so many people I would like to recognize—and apologies in advance for those I will miss. Senator BLUMENTHAL, thanks for working with me on one of the greatest humanitarian and civil rights causes of the 21st century: human trafficking. We started a caucus, and we have enacted a number of bills to address trafficking, including ensuring justice for victims of sex trafficking and holding internet sites accountable to prevent the facilitation of trafficking, the one time that Congress has been able to successfully eliminate the section 230 immunity.

Senator WHITEHOUSE has worked with me to change the way addiction is addressed in this country by offering the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act to provide a broad response to the opioid crisis. It provides individuals with the evidence-based treatment and recovery services they need.

I think looking at addiction as a disease is probably the most important thing we did in that legislation, in addition to the significant funding. I want to thank Senator BLUNT, whom I see here, for his role on the Appropriations Committee for funding the Federal Government's addiction programs at record levels. Senator CAPITO has been right there with him.

Senator KLOBUCHAR and I worked to pass the STOP Act, effectively keeping China from shipping fentanyl through the U.S. mail, and Senator CAPITO and Senator MANCHIN have worked with me to pass important bills on scheduling fentanyl analogs to make sure that it is illegal.

I have been deeply and personally engaged on the substance abuse issue for over 25 years, when I started my own antidrug group in Ohio that has become, over time, a model prevention coalition and enacted the Drug-Free Communities Act that has helped spur the establishment of about 2,000 community coalitions around the country. By the way, I worked on that with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY when I was in the House.

In fact, CHUCK took me to Iowa with him to help set up an antidrug coalition there. That was almost as interesting as going as his guest to the Iowa State Fair when I was U.S. trade representative.

Senator SHAHEEN and I have worked over the years on so many foreign policy issues, as well as energy efficiency. We introduced our first energy efficiency bill in 2011 and gotten most of it signed into law in the years since, help-

ing reduce energy bills for families and businesses and actually reduce emissions by simply using less energy.

And I thank my college classmate Senator HOEVEN for his leadership on our energy efficiency bill and his all-of-the-above energy approach and, mostly, for helping me improve my Spanish by adding a North Dakota accent. I also want to thank Senator BENNET for our successful efforts on encouraging carbon capture and sequestration. Our legislation is starting the work to do that.

I appreciate Senator STABENOW's partnership as my cochair on the Great Lakes Task Force. Working with her and all members of the task force, we have made a lot of progress fighting harmful algal blooms and invasive species, and so many other issues important to our constituents along the world's largest freshwater resource.

Thanks to Senator KAINE, as my co-chair of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, who worked with me to challenge Congress to do more to address the Nation's skills gap and promote the JOBS Act, providing individuals with the skills they need to get good-paying jobs. Those skills are needed out there. We need to focus more on how we ensure we are not just spending money to send young people to college but also getting them the industry-recognized skills that they need.

Senators COONS, BURR, and WHITEHOUSE, as cochairs of the International Conservation Caucus, you have been great partners over the years on our legislation to combat wildlife trafficking, conserve forests, and develop strategies to protect some international treasures, like the Okavango Delta in southern Africa.

I appreciate Senators WARNER and KING and former Senator Alexander for working with me to pass the Restore Our Parks Act, which is finally addressing the massive deferred maintenance backlog at our national parks so that some of our Nation's most treasured landscapes, memorials, and monuments can be enjoyed by visitors and generations to come.

Because of the CHIPS and Science Act, a bipartisan legislation I worked on closely with my colleagues Senators YOUNG, TILLIS, SINEMA, and SCHUMER, Intel recently broke ground on its semiconductor plant outside of Columbus, the largest investment in the history of Ohio and an investment we believe will grow over time.

With the CHIPS Act now law, we can reverse this trend of this critical semiconductor manufacturing capability being sent overseas. It is going to create thousands of high-paying jobs here but, most importantly to me, help strengthen our national security.

These remarks would be incomplete without a reference to our work on tax reform. As I mentioned when I decided to run for the Senate in 2009, Ohio was losing jobs and our economy was falling behind. My campaign was based, in

part, on a plan for jobs that focused on a number of economic policies, including fixing our Tax Code, making it competitive again for American workers and businesses.

In 2017, one of the highlights in the Senate for me was when I was able to work with a small group of lawmakers—PAT TOOMEY, TIM SCOTT, JOHN THUNE—to help deliver on this promise with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the first time Congress had passed comprehensive tax reform in 31 years.

It cut taxes for middle-class families, reformed our Business Tax Code to create more jobs and higher wages for Ohio workers, and it updated our International Code to encourage employers to actually bring jobs and investment back here to America.

I wish it could have been more bipartisan, but, frankly, much of what I led on the international side had absolute bipartisan roots, and I believe it worked. Tax reform helped usher in a period of unprecedented economic growth felt broadly. After tax reform and before the pandemic, we had 19 straight months of wage gain of 19 percent or more, well above inflation, and most of the wage gains, by the way, went to lower income and middle-income workers.

We also had the lowest poverty rate since we started keeping track of it back in the 1950s and the lowest unemployment rate ever for Blacks, women, Hispanics. It was an opportunity economy.

Unfortunately, a lot of those gains have been washed away by the pandemic in an avalanche of stimulus spending over the last 2 years that has fed the demand side of the economy while supply has been constricted by COVID but also by regulations, particularly in energy, contributing to the highest inflation in 40 years.

I hope the new Senate will have an opportunity to reset and, working with the House, make pro-growth economic policies a higher priority.

I want to thank so many of my colleagues who have worked with me over the years to support Ukraine in its ongoing fight for freedom. This is an issue near and dear to my heart and to Ohio. As some of you know, we are the home of many Ukrainian Americans and other nationality groups that are committed to the goal of a free and independent Europe.

I want to thank DICK DURBIN, the co-founder and cochair with me of the Ukraine Caucus and my Republican colleagues in the caucus who are so passionate on Ukraine: Senators GRAHAM, WICKER, CRAMER, COTTON, BARRASSO, RISCH, BURR, MURKOWSKI, SULLIVAN, CORNYN, MCCONNELL, JOHNSON, ERNST, and others. And I want to thank all those who joined me on 10 trips to Ukraine since 2014, when Ukraine rose up and threw off a corrupt Russian-backed government and turned to us, turned to the West. This includes two recent sobering visits to Ukraine with Senators KLOBUCHAR and COONS.

In 2015, I authored a bill called the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, which has become the key funding account we have used to train and equip the Ukrainian Armed Forces. We need to continue to fund this account and lead the free world, carrying the torch of freedom.

Since Russia's original occupation of Ukraine escalated into a full-scale war on February 24 of this year, I have now spoken on the Senate floor 27 times—every week we have been in session—about the unprovoked, illegal, and brutal invasion of Ukraine.

My most recent speech was last night so I won't go on, except to say that we are at a critical juncture right now, and it is more important than ever that we support Ukraine. So I am going to be fighting hard for a continuation of aid to Ukraine before Christmas.

We just discussed so many examples of breaking through the partisan gridlock and getting things done. Despite these achievements, I do worry about the divisive political rhetoric in our country. It is important we restore faith in our democratic institutions, both for our own country's sake, and so we can continue to be that beacon of hope and opportunity to the rest of the world.

We can rise above the cynicism and the dysfunction. We just talked a lot about how that is happening and has happened over my last 12 years in this body.

We certainly did it on infrastructure, as I have outlined, and we have done it in so many other ways. I urge all of us to remember that there is more that unites us than divides us. I hope that one of the things we can agree on is the need to uphold this institution and what it stands for.

I strongly believe that means preserving the legislative filibuster that protects the rights of the minority in the Senate and is really the only thing that forces us to work in a bipartisan way. The result, when we find common ground, is better legislation that will stand the test of time and not be changed every time there is a change in the majority in this body.

Our country and this body face enormous challenges, whether it is economy, record inflation, the national debt that is robbing future generations, the absence of any real border security in our broken immigration system, or the looming insolvency of our entitlement programs. These issues won't be solved by one party running over the other and imposing its will on the Senate and the country. It will only be solved by us working together in good faith.

At the start of my remarks today, I said that serving the people of Ohio is the greatest honor of my life. Over the past 12 years, I have worked well with my colleague and friend from Ohio, Senator SHERROD BROWN, on issues important to our State.

SHERROD, we have canceled each other's votes out many times on the floor

of the Senate, but we have also figured out how to work together. And I am proud of the work we have done on issues that are important to Ohio, like the Great Lakes, trade enforcement, addiction, and important judicial nominations like the district court judge we just confirmed this afternoon.

Despite our differences, we made progress for Ohio together. I hope you will have the same type of relationship, a good working relationship, with my friend Senator-elect J.D. Vance. J.D. has an impressive background of service in our military and in the private sector. I know he wants to make a difference in the lives of Ohio workers and families, and I look forward to watching him in action here in the Senate.

I know what it is like to be in public service with young children so I want to wish J.D., his wife Usha, and their three kids well. Jane and I support you both.

Thanks to everyone who has served on Team Portman throughout my career—the first Bush White House, the House of Representatives, the USTR, the OMB, and here in the Senate. We are having an alumni event tonight with a couple hundred of some of the best public servants ever assembled, and Jane and I are looking forward to seeing you all there. I have an amazing Senate staff who stuck with me to the bitter end. Thank you, both in Ohio and in Washington, DC. Many of them are here in the Chamber today.

I want to thank them for their hard work and their dedication to getting things done. They worked really hard for the people of Ohio and for our country and have enabled us to be so much more effective. Nothing we accomplished would have been possible without you.

I want to thank everyone who works in the Senate and makes it function well, whether it is the cloakroom staff, the doorkeepers, the Capitol Police, the cafeteria workers, the subway drivers, all of them in a very practical way. Democracy functions because of you, so thank you. I hope many of you can join us at our thank-you reception for you on Friday afternoon.

Special thanks to Leader MCCONNELL. MITCH, I appreciate your encouragement over the years. Your trust in me to take on a leadership role on important assignments and for your commitment and devotion to this institution and the health of our democracy.

None of this works without having a loving and supportive family. All of you know that. So to my wife Jane and the three people in the world I am most proud of—Jed, Will, and Sally—thank you for your unconditional support and the sacrifices you made. I am looking forward to being in Ohio full time, spending more time with family and friends, the Golden Lamb—our family restaurant—and getting back to the private sector. And, somehow, I hope to stay involved in the public policy issues we have been talking about today.

Finally, thanks to my Senate colleagues who made coming to work every day enjoyable and productive. Thanks for reaching out to me to work together and accepting my offers to work with you. Relationships matter in this place. I will miss my colleagues.

One consolation is that our retiring class consists of good friends who I hope to cross paths with in the real world. Senators BLUNT, BURR, INHOFE, LEAHY, and TOOMEY have all made impressive contributions in their tenure here. I am thinking maybe we should start a post-Senate support group.

And, come January, this place loses a great intellect and a great friend—BEN SASSE.

And I think, BEN, you should hold the meetings at the University of Florida, if it is OK.

Mr. SASSE. OK.

Mr. PORTMAN. OK. Done.

So to my colleagues, I have worked with every one of you in one way or another. Thank you for that privilege, and Godspeed as you continue to serve your constituents and continue to carry that torch of freedom forward.

Thank you.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO). The Senator from South Dakota.

#### TRIBUTE TO ROB PORTMAN

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, we all just had the opportunity to hear from our colleague—somebody who I am really going to miss—with his final remarks here on the Senate—well, I don't think his final remarks but certainly his, I guess you call it, going-away speech.

But I just appreciate so much having had the opportunity to work with Senator PORTMAN.

I know that, as he pointed out, staff not only here in the Chamber, around the Capitol, his personal staff—all people who have made profound contributions to that incredible record of accomplishments that he just talked about. That doesn't happen. Anybody who works here for very long realizes the incredible contributions that staff make to getting things done around here. And so I express my appreciation, as he did, to all of them for all you did to make Senator PORTMAN's time here so productive.

And it is great to see his wife Jane, daughter Sally here as well, who are all part of this partnership and this team that all of us know are so critical to being able to make a difference here in the Senate and the many sometimes sacrifices, contributions that they make on a day-in and day-out basis.

But ROB is someone I have gotten to break bread with a lot of times during our years together here in the Senate, and we have become really good friends, and I am going to miss having him here, as I said.

ROB has spent a lot of years in public service serving this country—12 years in the House of Representatives, where I first got acquainted with him; U.S.